

TESTIMONY of DENNIS CAHILL, BRIDGEPORT, CT, IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL #363

March 4, 2014, Housing Committee Hearing

My name is Dennis Cahill. I am a resident of Bridgeport and my building is a supportive housing community subsidized by project-based Section 8 funds administered by the Bridgeport Housing Authority. I have been President of my building's tenant association the past twelve years and a member of the Board of the Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network for seven years. I am here today to support Senate Bill #363 and request that both the House and Senate vote its passage into law.

My colleagues at PHRN have put forth the major points in support of this bill. Governor Malloy has pledged \$300 million for affordable housing along with \$30 million for supportive housing over ten years. PHRN is also pleased that Department of Housing Commissioner Klein favors this initiative and we look forward to working with DOH to improve and maintain our public housing communities in Connecticut.

In the administration of public housing, it is absolutely critical for residents to have a seat at the table and a voice in revitalization issues affecting their homes. The revitalization law passed in 2011 gave residents this right; PHRN has followed up for two years with tenant organizing and technical assistance activities at communities going through this process.

PHRN is the only organization with a statewide membership base of independent resident-led tenant groups in public housing. Our reputation, and with it requests for assistance, has grown due to our success in organizing public housing residents throughout the state, educating residents about their rights, and advocating for residents at the local, state, and federal levels for laws that will improve public housing.

I thank you for your time today and request that you pass this bill out of committee because it is the right thing to do for public housing residents.